succession of time! What long efforts to move from one place to another! And how we rest between struggles! How, at the least slope, we sit down!

DETERMINISM AND RESTRAINT

I came to a sort of feeling of certainty. Yes, my actions seemed to me to proceed in a happy and full way and as if from a sure source. Their beauty would not be visible to me until later. I even quickly convinced myself that the beauty of my acts, in order to seem perfect and pleasing to me, must not be prepared by me and must be barely foreseen until the moment of the act itself. My finest acts, or at least those which seemed finest to me, are those whose beauty toolc me by surprise. And the intoxication that I then felt suddenly filled me with that particular dizziness which permitted forgetfulness of self, with that strength, too, which would have made me able to do anything. At such moments I felt, as if in spite of myself, my whole being stretch, stiffen, harden; I became harsh to myself and took delight in treating myself very roughly. At times, convinced as I was that any of my actions would always result in the greater glorification of my life, I dreamed, almost out of spite, of letting myself go, of relaxing my will, of giving myself respite and leisure. I never could, and I realized that in me restraint was more natural than yielding to pleasure is in others, that I was not free not to will, to relax, and to cease resisting; and I realized at the same time that from that very absence of liberty came the beauty of my acts,

PARADOXES

Slow evolution: already the intelligence has ceased to seein to me the pearl of great price for which everything else is sold. The vanity of

understanding everything is just as ridiculous as any other vanity, and more dangerous than any other. After a short while the thing you least understand is yourself.

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And do not seek to welcome everything; repulse rather. Remember that the Hebrews killed but did not convert. It is always the enemy that one welcomes. The Mussulmans know this too; they do not listen to the thought of others; they resist it. What allows mules to be obstinate is their blinders. And what will you gain by understanding that all the rest has just as much reason to exist as you? Understanding is the beginning of approving. To negate with conviction one must never have looked at what one negates.

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